

(c) if so, the details of the same; and

(d) the steps taken/proposed to be taken to exhaust the waiting list in Rajasthan?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEELAHMAD): (a) to (c) Sir, 2374 telephone exchanges of Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) are functioning in Rajasthan (as on 1.10.2006) with total capacity of 22,75,472 lines.

Two new telephone exchanges have already been opened during the current financial year as below:—

(i) Todi Nagar in Sikar SSA with 944 lines;

(ii) Rupa Ki Nangal in Jaipur with 128 lines;

Since enough telephone capacity is already available in fixed line segment, there is no plan to expand the capacity further.

(d) Most of the waiting list in Rajasthan is in remote and scattered areas. To wipe out this waiting list, Wireless in Local Loop (WLL) technology equipment is mainly planned during 2006-07. Out of 327 WLL stations planned, 81 are already under installation.

Percentage of rural tele-density

†886. SHRI RAM JETHMALANI:

SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that on an average, the availability of telephones in the rural belts of the country comes to only 2 per cent;

(b) if not, the percentage thereof;

(c) whether Government have set any target to increase this percentage; and

(d) if so, the details of the target set and the planning to achieve the target?

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEELAHMAD): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The rural availability of telephones is 1.84% as on 31.10.2006 (latest available).

(c) and (d) Yes, Sir. As per NTP-1999 (New Telecom Policy-1999), target fixed to increase rural availability to 3% by March 2007 and 4% by 2010. Details of Planning/actions being taken to achieve the target are as under:—

- (i) BSNL (Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited) has restored laying of underground cable upto 5 Kms of telephone exchange against the earlier standard of 2.5 Kms for providing telephone on landline.
- (ii) BSNL is deploying WLL (Wireless in Local Loop) network in rural areas to meet the demand of telephone connections beyond 5 Kms of exchange i.e. scattered and far-flung rural areas and where telephone connection is not possible on landlines.
- (iii) BSNL is deploying its mobile network to cover gaps in existing coverage and additional requirements based on customer base besides covering villages with population 5000 and above and thereafter going to villages with population 1000 and above with subsequent expansion.
- (iv) BSNL has also received the work for provisioning of VPTs (Village Public Telephones) in a 66822 undisputed, accessible and inhabited villages having population more than 100 including 14183 villages in remote and far flung areas to be provided on DSPTs (Digital Satellite Phones Terminal).

Recommendations of the NKC

887. SHRIMATI PREMA CARIAPPA.
SHRIMATI SHOBHANA BHARTIA:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the National Knowledge Commission has submitted a set of 10 recommendations to the Prime Minister relating to setting up of portals on water, energy, environment knowledge network, higher education, intellectual property rights, traditional knowledge and health issues;